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ABSTRACT

The Developmental Speech Sequence Model (DSSM) can be applied effectively with beginning forensics competitors. It provides a detailed 10 point model, outlined within the headings of introduction, body, and conclusion: (1) Opening; (2) Objective of Speech; (3) Overview of Main Ideas; (4) Statement of Problem; (5) Statement of Solution; (6) Statement of Rationale; (7) Statement of Implementation; (8) Review of Main Ideas; (9) Restatement of Objective; and (10) Closing. A persuasive presentation of the utility of teeth flossing highlights usage of the DSSM. Beginning forensics competitors benefit from DSSM through a concrete understanding of process. (SR)

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# PERSUASION AS A DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE FOR THE BEGINNING COMPETITOR IN INTERSCHOLASTIC FORENSICS

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PERSUASION AS A DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE FOR THE BEGINNING COMPETITOR IN INTERSCHOLASTIC FORENSICS

As a professor of speech, the author has used a variety of models for teaching persuasive speaking to beginning speakers. A common shortcoming has been most models require additional instruction to ensure student understanding. The Developmental Speech Sequence Model (DSSM) is an approach that can be applied effectively with beginning forensics competitors. This ten point model is detailed but it also allows the speaker a degree of creative freedom. Forensics coaches can modify use of this model depending on the experience and skill level of the beginning competitor. The following outlines the ten points within three headings of introduction, body and conclusion.

INTRODUCTION: I. Opening (to orient the audience with the speaker), II. Objective of Speech (to clarify the speaker's purpose), III. Overview of Main Ideas (to orient the audience with the speaker's perspective on his/her purpose).

BODY: IV. Statement of Problem (The specific problem the speaker is trying to persuade the audience to overcome. State why the audience should be interested in the topic). V. Statement of Solution (The solution to the problem that the speaker is trying to persuade the audience to adopt.) VI. Statement of Rationale (Why the intended solution is the most logical answer to the problem.) VII. Statement of Implementation (How the intended solution can be put into effect. What action the audience needs to take.)

CONCLUSION: VIII. Review of Main Ideas (to summarize the speaker's perspective on his/her purpose), IX. Restatement of Objective (to ensure clarification and relevance of speaker purpose), X. Closing (to acknowledge the audience's time and interest).

Usage of the DSSM can best be exemplified through application of the DSSM with an actual topic. The following three paragraphs highlight usage of the DSSM with a persuasive presentation of teeth flossing. This topic was selected from a survey of midwestern forensics coaches regarding health care topics.

INTRODUCTION: I. Opening ("Good afternoon, my name is John Smith..."), II. Objective of Speech ("Today I would like to talk to you about the need for teeth flossing..."), III. Overview ("Much of my presentation will describe findings from the American Dental Association (ADA) that substantiate the benefits of dental flossing...).

BODY: IV. State of Problem ("The ADA reports 67% of all Americans will suffer from severe dental decay before the age of 70. Forty-eight percent of this group will have brushed regularly but still been unable to effectively combat tooth decay. Could you be in this one-third of our population?) V. Statement of Solution ("I am moved to speak to you about this topic today because the ADA reports a vast majority of Americans suffering from severe tooth decay could avoid this painful situation simply by flossing their teeth daily...") VI. Statement of Rationale ("Although brushing with

toothpaste is helpful, and makes your mouth fresh, it is flossing with dental floss that removes food and plaque from between teeth and gums where tooth decay begins and does most damage...") VII. Statement of Implementation ("You can begin to effectively fight tooth decay today. You can do it in five minutes in your home and it will cost about $1.50 Merely visit your local pharmacy, purchase a package of dental floss, and ask your pharmacist for flossing instructions. ADA flossing instructions are readily available from your pharmacy or local dentist office...") CONCLUSION: VIII. Review ("Again, it is flossing that effectively fights tooth decay, not merely brushing...") IX. Restatement of Objective ("Your first step towards effective oral hygiene is less time consuming than washing your hair. This is not merely opinion. It is scientific fact.") X. Closing ("Awareness about this topic provided me with one simple way I can help keep my life time health care costs down. I hope our time together today has convinced you...").

The DSSM approach parallels the well known Motivated Sequence developed by Alan Monroe (Ehninger, Gronbeck, McKerrow, and Monroe, 1986, pp. 153-155). His primary premise is that the topic should be stated as a problem and this problem is to be followed with a solution to the problem. Development of the solution outlines the intended results which can be realized. The DSSM, though somewhat similar to the Motivated Sequence, provides further

elaboration in the areas of problem definition and solution implementation.

Monroe describes the basic points of the Motivated Sequence in his original description of this model (Monroe, 1935, pp. vii-x). He outlines five steps: Attention, Need, Satisfaction, Visualization, and Action. The objective of the Attention Step is to gain and maintain the attention of the audience with a sub-topic that is related to your primary topic. The Need Step poses a need (or reason) for the audience to be interested in your presentation. The Satisfaction Step provides an answer to the need. The Visualization Step describes results that can be attained by using the Satisfaction Step. The Action Step instructs what action needs to be taken to satisfy the established need. Both the Motivated Sequence and DSSM are appropriate in interscholastic forensics competition. However, the DSSM's step-by-step approach can be especially helpful for the beginning competitor because of the additional direction.

Forensics judging criteria can vary significantly and this can be confusing for the new competitor. When evaluating speeches using the DSSM, evaluation can be based on the DSSM main ideas. Other evaluation criteria can include: 1) assigned time frame, 2) delivery and adaptation to audience, 3) verbal and nonverbal factors, and 4) ability to persuade to action. Thus, the beginning competitor can learn basic evaluation considerations and build from these as his/her skills become more sophisticated.

Persuasive speaking skills are obviously useful in forensics competition, the classroom, business, and the professions. The importance of persuasive speaking is emphasized from a number of perspectives. The following perspectives serve to clarify the role of persuasive speaking in contrast with informational speaking. Miller, Burgoon, and Burgoon offer a complete summary of attitude change research that describes the role of persuasive appeals (Arnold and Bowers, 1984, pp. 400-474). Basic research on latitudes of acceptance and rejection is developed by Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall (1965). Liska (1978, pp. 85-92) outlines the role of credibility and how it varies from situation to situation and topic to topic. These perspectives help provide a foundation for contemporary persuasive speaking and they highlight relevant concerns. The DSSM clearly builds on these concerns.

Response to the DSSM has been positive. The beginning forensics competitor benefits from DSSM usage as he/she has a concrete understanding of process. Speakers deliver with increased confidence as they are fully aware of what is expected of them (but not at the expense of creativity). As new speakers improve their persuasive skills they have a firm theoretical foundation from which to build and refer as needed.

## Notes

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